

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS -- UNOFFICIAL RETURNS
FROM CITIES

REF: ATHENS 2355

1. SUMMARY. GREECE'S FIRST MUNICIPAL/VILLAGE ELECTIONS IN DECADE TOOK PLACE QUIETLY ON MAR 30. NATIONAL RADIO CARRIED UNOFFICIAL RESULTS ONLY FROM THE LARGEST CITIES WITH OUTCOME OF CONTESTS IN OVER 250 CITIES AND 5,000 VILLAGES TO BE PUBLISHED LATER. IN ATHENS AND PATRAS THE CANDIDATES SUPPORTED BY A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL OPPOSITION PARTIES WON HANDILY. IN THESSALONIKI AND PIRAEUS WELL-KNOWN LEFTISTS AND CONSERVATIVES GARNERED PLURALITIES AND THESE CITIES WILL HAVE RUN-OFF ELECTIONS APRIL 6. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ONLY ANNOUNCED FINAL RESULT FROM SUNDAY'S ELECTION AS OF 1000 HOURS MAR 31 IS JOHN PAPATHEODOROU'S, BACKED BY CU/NF, PASOK, AND COMMUNIST GROUPS, VICTORY OF 53PC IN THE ATHENS ELECTORATE, THUS TAKING TWO-THIRDS OF THE ATHENS CITY COUNCIL FOR HIS LEFT OF CENTER TICKET.

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GEORGE PLYTAS, GENERALLY CONSIDERED THE CONSERVATIVE

CANDIDATE, WON 37PC AND HIS GROUP TAKES THE REMAINING ONE THIRD COUNCIL SEATS. PAPTAEODOROU TOLD EMBOFF LAST WEEK (RETEL) THAT HE HAD A 50/50 CHANCE OF WINNING PARTICULARLY IF PLYTAS WELL-KNOWN ROYALIST ASSOCIATIONS WERE FULLY EXPLOITED AGAINST HIM. THE BIG RALLY OF THE PLYTAS CANDIDACY ON MAR 28 ENDED WITH ANTI ROYALIST HECKLING AND THE ONLY STREET SCUFFLES OF THE OTHERWISE LETHARGIC CAMPAIGN. THE ATHENS MUNICIPAL CONSTITUENCY CORRESPONDS ROUGHLY TO THE CENTRAL ATHENS PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY WHERE CARAMANLIS AND THE CONSERVATIVE FORCES DREW 38PC, 37PC AND 54 PC, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE 1963, 1964 AND 1974 ELECTIONS. ATHENS HAD A 76PC TURNOUT OF QUALIFIED VOTERS, WHICH IS A MODERATELY GOOD RESPONSE.

3. RUN OFFS WILL TAKE PLACE IN GREECE'S SECOND AND THIRD LARGEST CITIES, THESSALONIKI AND PIRAEUS, APRIL 6 BECAUSE MULTIPLE CANDIDACIES PREVENTED A CLEAR MAJORITY FROM BEING OBTAINED BY ANYONE. IN THESSALONIKI, COMMUNIST CANDIDATE PAPADOPOULOS LED FIELD, FOLLOWED BY EX-INTERIM MAYOR ZANNAS. IN PIRAEUS, THE MODERATE LEFT CANDIDATE VOULODIMOS LED CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE LEOSIS. THE COMMUNIST PARTY EXTERIOR FACTION CANDIDATE KYRIAKAKOS PLACED THIRD. IN PATRAS, JOHN ANINOS, WHO HAD CENTER-LEFTPARTISAN SUPPORT IS LEADING WITH ABOUT 60PC OF THE VOTE.

4. RETURNS FROM OTHER CITIES AND COUNTRY SIDE ARE STILL FRAGMENTARY AND THE INCOMPLETE RESULTS AS WELL AS THE AMBIGUOUS CHARACTER OF MANY LOCAL POLITICAL ALLIANCES CAUTION AGAINST JUMPING TO CONCLUSION THAT RESULTS FROM LARGE CITIES NECESSARILY SUGGEST A NATIONAL PARTISAN TREND FAVORING OPPOSITION LEFT/LIBERAL COALITIONS.

5. THE EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER WHEN FINAL RESULTS BECOME KNOWN.
KUBISCH

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